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08/01/2006 05:03 PM

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Subject Fw: Daily Herald (AP): Park City neighborhood off
EPA cleanup list

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07/24/2006 06:16 AM

To Frank Montarelli/OCP/R8/USEPA/US@EPA

cc

Subject Daily Herald (AP): Park City neighborhood off EPA
cleanup list

Monday, July 24, 2006

Daily Herald: Park City neighborhood off EPA cleanup list

Utah

The Associated Press

PARK CITY -- The Environmental Protection Agency has dropped a Park City neighborhood from its list of areas that could be slapped as a superfund site in need of environmental clean up.

Last month the agency said it had "archived" Prospector Square, meaning that it no longer considers the area a health risk.

"As a Prospector resident, I'm absolutely thrilled," said Park City Mayor Dana Williams, who has lived there for 15 years. "It's time for the neighborhood to dance in the street."

Park City's silver mining heritage -- which left metal tailings in its soils -- can be blamed for the community's EPA troubles.

In 1983, a soil analysis by the Utah Geological Survey found abnormally high levels of lead, arsenic and cadmium in the city's Prospector Square neighborhood. Health tests also showed residents had slightly elevated blood-lead levels.

The next year the EPA put Prospector Square on a list of problem communities.

Then in 1986, Hugh Kaufman, EPA's assistant director of hazardous site control, compared the resort town to Love Canal, a chemical dump site uncovered in an upstate New York neighborhood.

City officials long questioned the quality of the science behind state and federal claims that hard-rock mining tailings presented a significant health risk.

Fearing the EPA would never resolve the issue, Park City leaders did their own testing and found their own solution, said Utah's former U.S. Sen. Jake Garn, who tried to help at the time.

Officials passed an ordinance requiring residents to apply 6 inches of untainted dirt to Prospector lots and established a special-improvement district to help cover costs.

"The discussion since then has been, is (the cap) effective?" said Ron Ivie, the city's chief building official who supervised the mitigation.

Ivie says the answer is yes. Over the past 20 years there has been no evidence of health risks to residents or visitors, he said.

This story appeared in The Daily Herald on page D2.